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INFO RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 0229  
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [SP](#) [LE](#)  
SUBJECT: SPAIN WANTS TO LEAD BRIGADE IN LEBANON

REF: A. 2066 AND PRIOR  
[1](#)B. 2138

Classified By: A/DCM Kathy Fitzpatrick for reasons 1.4 (b) & (d).

1.(U) As described in ref A, the GOS continues planning to send an infantry battalion of Spanish troops with armored vehicles and support units (totaling around 1200 troops) to support UNIFIL's mission in Lebanon. The Council of Ministers is scheduled to consider the deployment on September 1, with Congressional debate - and likely authorization - coming on September 7. In addition, Foreign Minister Moratinos announced that it is the GOS's intention that Spain lead a multi-national brigade in Lebanon. On the humanitarian side, Spain has contributed four million euros, and Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) sources have told emboffs that Moratinos will announce another donation at the Stockholm conference (ref B).

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Spanish MOD Policy Director General Benito Raggio told PolCouns on August 29 that UNSYG Kofi Annan has said that it is 95% certain that Spain will lead a brigade. Raggio said that Spanish Chief of Defense General Sanz will host a force generation conference in Madrid on September 1 to solicit EU contributions to the multi-national brigade. Spain is particularly looking to Portugal, Poland, and Finland, among others. It will probably reach out to non-EU countries later, perhaps including Morocco, with which Spain successfully teamed in its contribution to the UN mission in Haiti. He said Spain's own contribution to the multinational brigade would total about 1200 troops and that MOD is contemplating sending an advance party to Lebanon as early as Wednesday, August 30 to begin planning for the brigade deployment. Raggio also noted that Moratinos said in Brussels last week that Spain is interested in leading UNIFIL II after the French and Italian leadership terms end. Raggio underscored that Spain is taking a significant role in Lebanon, which it sees as a responsibility under the BMENA/Alliance of Civilizations effort.  
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